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**Karyn Polito**  
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Acting Commissioner

# Annual Department of Transitional Assistance Organizational Report

**November 2019**



# **REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

*November 2019*

## **OVERVIEW**

Section 10 of Chapter 10 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) to annually submit a report containing a description of the organization of the department and a review of the work of the agency.

## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION**

DTA's mission is to assist and empower low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. DTA offers a comprehensive system of programs and supports to help individuals and families achieve greater economic self-sufficiency, including food and nutritional assistance, economic assistance, and employment supports.

DTA serves one out of every nine people in the Commonwealth, including working families, children, elders, and people with disabilities.

## **PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED**

DTA administers four primary programs that receive both state and federal funding, which aim to meet the agency's mission. In addition to administering these programs, DTA provides rigorous oversight and special attention to eligibility standards and compliance for each program. DTA uses advanced analytics and a variety of fraud detection practices to promote programmatic integrity.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)**

SNAP benefits help families supplement their food budgets to afford nutritious food. Residents of the Commonwealth who participate in SNAP are families with children, elders, and persons with disabilities. While administered by DTA, SNAP benefits are 100% federally funded and regulated. The Commonwealth is responsible for 50% of the costs to administer the program.

Beyond the core responsibilities in administering the SNAP program, DTA works alongside a variety of partners contributing to the mission of food security in the Commonwealth.

### **TRANSITIONAL AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN (TAFDC)**

TAFDC is a state and federally funded program that provides financial assistance to families with children, and pregnant women, with little or no assets or income. TAFDC is operated under the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. Participants receive child care and transportation supports associated with job assistance and can access various supportive referrals. As a part of TAFDC, participants may be required to perform a work-related activity as a condition of eligibility.

### **EMERGENCY AID TO THE ELDERLY, DISABLED, AND CHILDREN (EAEDC)**

EAEDC is a state funded program, which provides financial assistance to certain adults who are elderly or disabled adults, as well as children. Those eligible for EAEDC include people over 65 who are waiting for Supplemental Security Income payments to begin, individuals unable to work due to a physical or mental incapacity, and individuals who are participating in a Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission program.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI) AND STATE SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS (SSP)**

The SSI program is a federal program that provides cash assistance to the elderly, disabled, and blind. Massachusetts provides optional state-funded supplemental payments designed to supplement these funds. DTA funds SSP payments for elderly, disabled, and blind recipients. Currently, the University of Massachusetts Medical School administers SSP payments for DTA.

### **AGENCY STAFFING**

Today, DTA employs approximately 1,640 civil servants across the Commonwealth in the areas of programs, policy, and management. DTA staff have a range of responsibilities from benefit eligibility, employment and training assistance, program integrity, legal, policy development, and fair hearings. 1,326 DTA employees, or more than 80% of the department's active employees, are deployed in one of our 22 local transitional assistance offices across the Commonwealth.

Currently, the department's SNAP workforce consists of 685 employees. This is comprised of 544 caseworkers and 141 supervisors. In recent years, DTA has modernized its business practice to improve departmental efficiency, particularly focused on improved customer experience. Utilizing a first available worker model, our SNAP employees provide services to a caseload made up of approximately 450,000 Massachusetts households, or 1 in 9 state residents.

The department's economic assistance workforce includes 351 DTA staff members in local offices serving clients who receive TAFDC and EAEDC. This includes 175 TAFDC caseworkers, 60 EAEDC caseworkers, and 83 supervisors, all of whom provide direct case management.

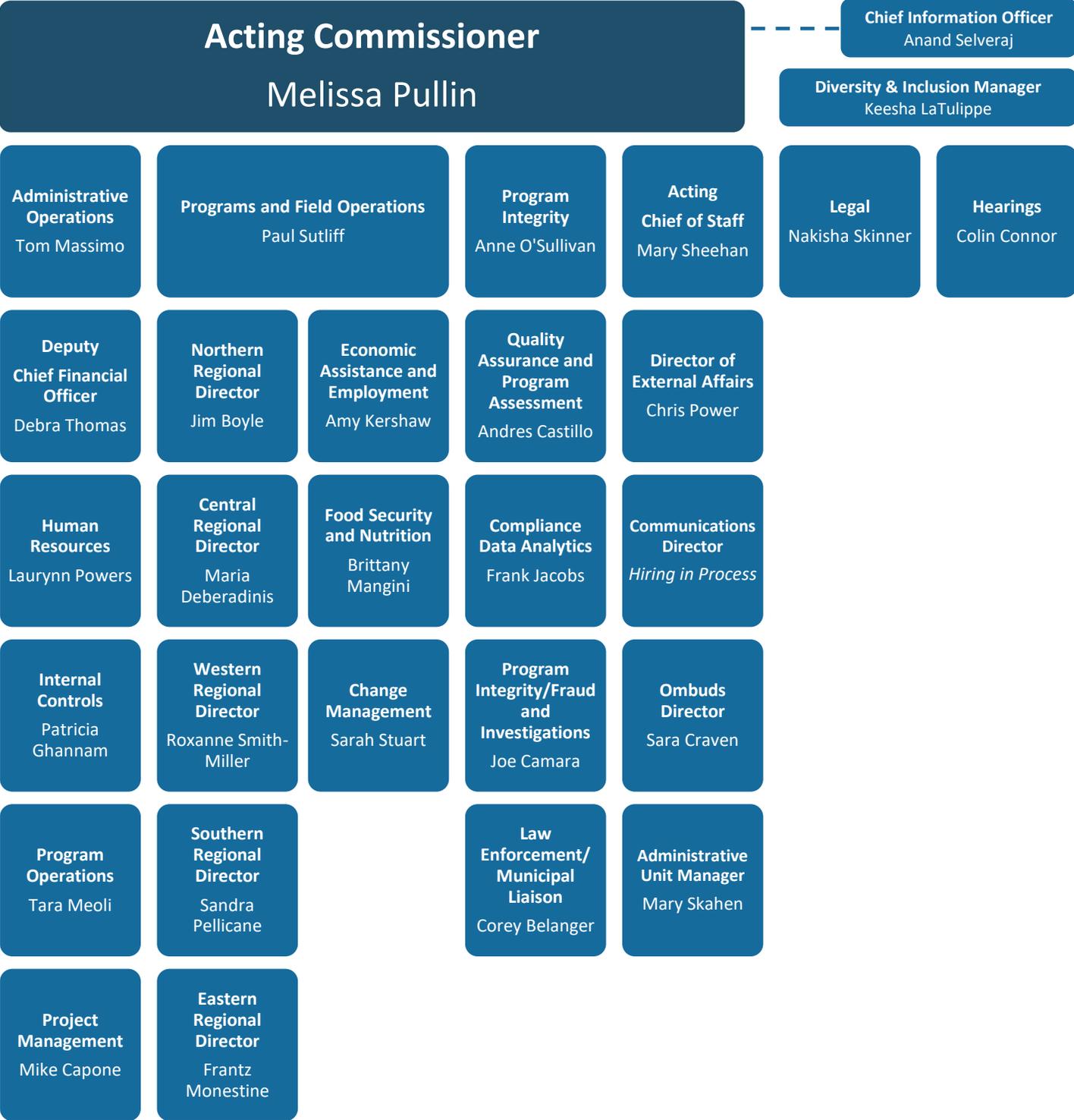
In addition to DTA's case management workforce, our local transitional assistance offices are staffed by 323 employees who serve in managerial roles, provide administrative assistance, or offer intensive, targeted client supports including Self-Sufficiency Specialists and Full Engagement Workers.

### **ORGANIZATION OF DTA**

DTA is organized into 22 local transitional assistance offices and one central office. Transitional assistance offices are responsible for providing direct services to clients and those seeking assistance throughout the Commonwealth. The agency's central office houses the Office of the Commissioner, senior management, program integrity, and other administrative units.

Included in this report is an organizational chart of DTA's Central Office and a leadership chart of the department's 22 local transitional assistance offices.

# DTA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE LEADERSHIP CHART

| Central Region                           | Eastern Region                            | Northern Region                                   | Southern Region                    | Western Region                                       |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Fitchburg Center</b><br>Jennifer Tait | <b>Brockton</b><br>Sean Beasley           | <b>Chelsea Center</b><br><i>Hiring in Process</i> | <b>Fall River</b><br>Melissa Zeitz | <b>Greenfield</b><br>Zoy Soulis                      |
| <b>Framingham</b><br>Lina Stolnik-Yoffe  | <b>Dudley Square</b><br>Neycole Howell    | <b>Lawrence</b><br>Elaine DeVito                  | <b>Hyannis</b><br>Peter Danzell    | <b>Holyoke</b><br>Joanne Lacour                      |
| <b>Southbridge</b><br>Joyce Clemence     | <b>Newmarket Square</b><br>Diane Deban    | <b>Lowell</b><br>Adrienne Anderson-Floyd          | <b>New Bedford</b><br>Nelson Abreu | <b>Pittsfield</b><br>Deni Evans                      |
| <b>Worcester</b><br>Lori Jacques-Basiner | <b>Quincy</b><br><i>Hiring in Process</i> | <b>Malden</b><br>Martine Cesar                    | <b>Plymouth</b><br>Sabre Ibrahim   | <b>Springfield Center</b><br>Melissa Pietraszkiewicz |
|  |   | <b>North Shore</b><br>Sylvia Hosman               | <b>Taunton</b><br>Karyn Gonzalez   |  |